

3 August 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Administrative Staff, OSR

THROUGH: Chief, Strategic Evaluation Division

SUBJECT: SE/C Comments on Experimental Alternative
Work Schedules

1. SE/C currently is participating in the alternative work-schedule program. One analyst, plus both of the branch's intelligence assistants (IAs), are working on a compressed work schedule. The two IAs work four 10-hour days, while the analyst works one week of five eight-hour days and one week of four 10-hour days. We currently have no one working flex time although branch analysts have worked such schedules in the past. (AIUO)

2. In general, the program has proven successful. The two IAs have worked out a schedule that provides the branch with 10-hour daily coverage, 5 days a week. The branch relies heavily on automated data bases, and our ability to make use of computer time in the early morning hours is particularly advantageous. Computer runs that take several hours to complete after 8:00 a.m. are completed in about 45 minutes to an hour between 6:30 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. The IAs are appreciative of the extra day off, finding that they use fewer hours of sick leave for routine medical appointments and less annual leave for personal business than otherwise would have been necessary. The fatigue level does not appear to be any more of a factor in a 10-hour day than in an 8-hour one. (AIUO)

3. From a managerial perspective I see few advantages for branch operations in having analysts on flex or compressed time. It improves employee morale for most of the same reasons cited by the IAs. On the other hand, the branch occasionally has been caught short by having

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unforeseen tasks levied upon us with rapid turn-a-round time requirements when the appropriate branch analyst has not been available because of his or her working schedule. Such instances have been infrequent, however, and the personal advantages accrued to the analysts may well outweigh the occasional inconveniences to branch operations. (AIUO)



Chief
Command and Control Branch
SR/SE

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Office of Personnel, Position Management
and Compensation Division (OP/PMCD)
Room 1016, Ames Building

FROM: OSR/TF/O

SUBJECT: Assessment of Alternate Work Schedule
Project (U)

REFERENCE: OP NOTICE No. 20-81-15 of 11 June 1981.

A. General Comments on Program This report describes the experience of the Operations Branch of the Theater Forces Division (TF/O), Office of Strategic Research with the use of alternative work schedules. Two branch members of TF/O have been participating in the project, in part while they were members of the predecessor branch TF/W. The project has been successful in most respects. The main problems have been with the computerized record system which does not accept alternate work weeks with unequal numbers of hours, and with arranging car pools for one of the participants. Other than these problems, production has remained at the same level, no problems have been experienced connected with employee unavailability, and the program has meant a boost in morale for those participating. Our division chief commented that he had had no problems as a result of the program.

The two participants were:

Name	GS	Schedule		Mission
		Experimental	Old	
[Redacted]	12	0730 - 1700	0800 - 1630	Analyst
		Mon-Fri week 2	Daily	
		Mon-Thur week 1		
		Friday off week 1 (original)		
[Redacted]	12	0800 - 1830		Analyst
		Mon-Thur week 1		
		Friday off week 1		
		0800 - 1630		
[Redacted]	12	Mon-Fri week 2 (revised)		Analyst
[Redacted]	12	0700 - 1730	0800 - 1630	Analyst
		Mon-Wed-Thu-Fri	Daily	
		Tuesday off		

B. Particular Impact

1. Efficiency of Government Operations

- a) Productivity No major change was noted. Mr. [] feels that he gets more done reading and writing on "long" days because of periods when the office is empty and no calls come in. [] comments similarly. Because of the relatively long term nature of our projects it is not possible to determine from this sample if actual production is increased.
- b) Usage of sick leave, annual leave, leave without pay. [] claimed decreased use of annual leave. No particular effect was noted on the branch.
- c) Employee Turnover There was none.
- d) Number of Overtime Hours Experienced Until recently there was no effect. For the past several months [] has been working intensively on a long paper for 9-10 hours a day, every weekday without taking his compensatory day off. In effect he has not been on the alternative schedule. This was simply a requirement of the paper.
- e) Job Satisfaction No particular effect was noted. One analyst commented that work hours are not a factor in his assessment of job satisfaction. Work hours may affect liking the job but satisfaction comes from the work itself.
- f) Morale Both employees reported a boost in morale resulting from participation in the project. Mr. [] noted that the "long" day meant less traffic driving at off hours, and he liked the three day weekend. Both commented that it was useful to have a weekday free for activities which are normally crowded with people on weekends.

2. Mass Transit facilities and traffic [] noted that when riding a bus on "long" workdays of the revised schedule, there was less choice of when to leave because of the lower frequency of buses during off hours. He drove most of the time, however, and for this mode of transportation there was less traffic which was definitely an advantage. When he worked nine hour days his time still fell into the period when buses ran frequently. []

preferred the nine-hour-a-day alternative to the revised version.

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[] lives in an area where no mass transit is available and he depends on a car pool. Formation of a four-day car pool was instrumental in his decision to participate in the program. The collapse of the car pool will influence his pending decision whether or not to switch back to a five day work schedule.

3. Increased opportunities for full and part-time employment There was no effect (not applicable might better apply to this case).
4. Individual and family generally There were very favorable comments from both participants about how their families perceived the program, and improved morale was noted as their most significant benefit of the program.

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C. Special Problems [] only problem has been getting in an appropriate car pool and keeping it going.

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[] began with an experimental schedule under which he worked 9-hour days for nine workdays, and then took off on the Friday of the week without a payday. This meant that he worked a total of 81 hours over two weeks, 45 hours during one week and 36 during the other. He was told the computerized time and attendance system would not accept two work weeks of unequal lengths in a pay period. For this reason he has switched to the revised schedule of one normal week and one week of four 10-hour days with a Friday off. He found the nine hour a day schedule preferable because he could find bus transportation more conveniently on days when he chose not to drive. This schedule was also more consistent.

D. Suggestions I would recommend finding some way to change the computerized time and attendance system in order to permit work weeks of unequal lengths. To advertise a program as aimed at permitting the employee more flexibility and then tell him he has to limit his choice because the computer will only accept a pay period of equal length work weeks is to make administration and management appear inflexible or ineffectual in handling minor variations.

I believe there is some positive effect on employees other than those participating directly in the program. The non-participants view the effort as an attempt to improve working conditions, and know that such an option is available if they wanted it. Those at the working level view the program as a demonstrated attempt of management to

consider individual needs and preferences. I believe termination of the program would have adverse effects on morale unless good reasons were given why the program did not work. It would be hard to convince those who have participated and are happy with this option.



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Date 4 August 1981

ROUTING AND TRANSMITTAL

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2. Chief, Administrative Staff/OSR		
3. <i>OP/PMCD/1016 Ames</i>		
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REMARKS

Assessment of Alternate Work Schedules. (Better late than never!)

OPR

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FROM: (Name, org. symbol, Agency/Post)	Room No.—Bldg.
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